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**HISTORY  
of the  
CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
1720-1970**

**Compiled by**

**Katherine Wellman Ross**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The sources of information contained in this brief history of the Church Society gathered at Lynn End in 1720 were found in the earliest records now kept in the vault at the Lynnfield Town Hall, and the later Church records kept at the Centre Church. Information was also obtained from materials written by both Mr. and Mrs. Eben Parsons, and printed in bulletins of the Essex Institute and the Essex Antiquarian. Also used as source material was the chapter on "Ecclesiastical History in the History of the Town of Lynnfield" by Thomas B. Wellman.

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Katherine Wellman Ross

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Book

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*Dr. Zdenek F. Bednar – Pastor, 1970*



*First Meeting House built in 1714, showing probable appearance as described by Mary A. Parsons in an Essex Antiquarium.*

## THE BEGINNING

No sooner had a little settlement been made in Lynn, then called Saugus, than the more adventurous of the settlers began exploring the territory further inland, referred to as "The Wilderness".

In 1639 some of the inhabitants of Lynn petitioned the General Court for an inland plantation at the head of their bounds. The petition was granted and included what are now the towns of North Reading, Reading, Wakefield (known until 102 years ago as South Reading) and Lynnfield.

By 1644 a sufficient number of houses had been built so that the Court ordered "that Lynn Village" should be called "Redding". A Meeting House was built there that year. As it was much easier to reach than the Meeting House in Lynn about twenty families of Lynn End (Lynnfield) went there on the Sabbath Day. By 1678 the little Meeting House had become crowded, so much so that the South Reading folks petitioned the General Court for "relief". The "adjacent farmers" did make some contribution toward the support and repair of the church, but not enough to build a new Meeting House.

The Colonial Records of 1635 state that 500 acres of land and a fresh water pond with a little island had been granted to John Humphrey. The pond known for many years as Humphrey's Pond is now called Suntaug Lake. These acres were soon divided and sold to yeomen, who were the farmer folks. Land was also cleared farther north.

## LYNN END CHURCH ORGANIZES

Before the end of the century the folks in Lynn End were thinking of the possibility of having a Meeting House of their own. In 1706 common lands were laid out (the Common), and in 1711 the petition that Lynn End might become a separate precinct was granted. On November 22, 1713 a group of men met at the home of John Bancroft and agreed upon plans for a Meeting House. Less than a month later the decision of where the building should be located was reached.

No time was lost for on December 7, 1714 a building had been erected. This date is proved by a deed recorded in the Probate Court at Salem. The deed reads in part: "For one Pound and Ten Shillings paid to John Going (Gowing) and Seven Shillings paid to Nathaniel Going a small parcell of land situated in Lynn containing by measure about 21 poles was purchased. The boundary of the land, 'South Westerly side of ye parcell of Land is Butted and Bounded as followeth viz all the land whereon ye Sd Meeting House now Standeth North Easterly by the land of Sd John Going North Easterly by the Raod which leadeth from Harts to Redding South Westerly by ye Charlestown Town Land Westerly ye Land of ye Sd John Going & ye Sd Nathaniel Going' "Bounds are as follows from the North Corner of Sd Meeting House to a stake by the Raod aforesaid, and from Sd Stake by ye Sd Raod to Charlestown Town Land at ye South East Corner".

## Church Buildings

The deed dated December 7, 1714 and recorded June 14, 1715, proves that the Meeting House Building had been erected in 1714. The building, as first constructed, was nearly square being thirty-seven and a half feet long and thirty-three feet wide. The posts were about eighteen feet high, the roof pitch low, and the great oak rafters, braced by a process called 'crowning', gave the effect of great strength. The building had an entrance on three sides with large horse blocks for dismounting in front of each door. There were box pews on the floor and galleries on three sides with the pulpit and sounding board on the fourth. In two of the galleries, the slaves and hind men were seated; gun powder was stored in the third. Some of the timber was made from trees cut on the ground.

Nearly seventy years later, in 1782, it was voted that the building should be cut in two, one end moved out and 14 feet put into the middle. This gave space for more pews— the pulpit was still placed in the middle of the room.

The Unitarian philosophy which became prevalent in the early nineteenth century caused a schism among the church members, and those of the more orthodox doctrine left the Meeting House. Those who remained could not maintain the whole building alone and changed the interior by putting in a second floor for their religious services leaving the lower floor for the many social, cultural, and civic uses of a "Town House". In this same room a primary school was conducted for ten years. In 1918 the town converted the lower part into the first "Chemical House" where the motorized fire engine was garaged. A bellfry was added for the fire alarm bell. In 1960, the Town voted to give the newly formed Historical Society the custodianship of the building, which is being restored as it was in 1838 except for the addition of modern conveniences. Few buildings have had more varied or constant use.

## 1832

In the year 1832, the eighteen persons who left the first Society built a church just across the street where they could continue their worship. The building was in the tradition of the New England churches of that period, simple in design and always painted white on the outside. The windows were long, and the panes of clear glass. Shutters were used to keep out the hot rays of the sun during the summer services and to make the building warmer when the northeast winds blew.

There was a gallery in the back of the church where the choir sat. The pulpit was of the steeple type; steps on each side lead to the part where the minister sat, and the desk was in front. During the pastorate of Rev. Harry L. Brickett, a parish house was added. About twenty years later, the "old fashioned" pulpit was removed, a chancel built, the first pipe organ installed, and a place for the choir built on the right hand side of the sanctuary.

During Dr. Sheldon's pastorate a large addition was made with three halls, a kitchen, and several church school rooms. When in the late 1950's, there was not enough room for all who came to the two Sunday morning services and the church school classes, plans were made to build a larger sanctuary, keeping intact what had already been constructed. It became possible to buy adjacent land, the property of Miss Elizabeth Green. Rev. Otto Jonas with an able and enthusiastic building committee voted to build "Anew for the Glory of God". The result is a beautiful sanctuary with a seating capacity of four-hundred and fifty, three hundred in the lower part, one-hundred and fifty in the balcony and forty in the choir section. The architects, Royal Barry Wills & Associates, created in the finest of colonial traditions, a place of worship that is an inspiration to all who enter and a delight to all who behold it. The construction was painstakingly carried out by the Cameron Fay Company of Wakefield.

## MINISTERS AND RECORDS 1720 to 1833

### REV. NATHANIEL SPARHAWK 1720-1731

There is little doubt that religious services were held at Lynn End before 1720, but no records have been found to prove it. The first minister was Rev. Nathaniel Sparhawk, the son of a minister. He was graduated from Harvard in 1715, and was ordained as minister at Lynn End on August 17, 1720, just 250 years ago. He married Elizabeth Perkins of this parish. She had been left at the death of her father part of his estate, and they lived in the house which she had inherited. During the eleven years of his pastorate, he baptised his three sons and a daughter who were born in Lynn End.

As early as 1727, differences between the Pastor and some of the parishioners had arisen and they were so keen that some of the members, including two deacons, had appealed to the Church in South Reading for an opportunity to rejoin the Society there. As in later cases of disagreements between church members and the pastor, the reason or reasons for the difficulties have not been recorded. Mr. Tracy in a "History of Essex County", wrote: "Mr. Sparhawk was a liberally educated man, a Harvard graduate of 1715, a person of more than average habits of observation". There is every reason to believe that the first minister was a sensitive man whose keen disappointment in his pastorate caused his early death. The seventy pounds a year voted to him as salary was in arrears for several years, and it was more than three years after his death that his widow received the last of the money due him.

Mr. Sparhawk refused to deliver the records of the Church Society, although two deacons were assigned the task of securing them; when they did not succeed, three other men went upon the same mission. This also was unsuccessful. He died in 1732 when thirty-eight years old.

### REV. STEPHEN CHASE 1731-1755

There are many records concerning the second pastorate preserved in a book given by Deacon John Bancroft. The book, guarded with care, is now in the possession of the Centre Congregational Church.

The first entry dated August 3, 1731 is "Yt ye Rev. Stephen Chase preach with us upon probation for such time as we can agree". Quickly following, on September 3, 1731, there was an unanimous vote to settle him as pastor. His salary was to be "one hundred Pounds Bills of Credit as they are now at this time or if money falls, the Precinct to make it up and if it rise the precinct to reap the benefit". Mr. Chase's letter of acceptance contained in detail what he desired as "fringe benefits". He was to have fire wood delivered to his house as long as he continued being the minister. Also, a "Convenient house and barn convenient to the meeting house as may be with accommodations to keep 3 cows, 1 horse and 10 sheep and two acres of land to raise necessities for a family". Mr. Chase looked well to the future for he added: "when the Precinct shall grow abler and I come to have a family of my own and my necessities call for it, you will make some addition to my salary for my comfort and support".

The house and barn built on the premises where the "Haskell" house is now located was thirty-five feet long and nineteen feet wide and was to have a "Convenient seler (cellar) and two staks of chimnis (stacks of chimneys)".

In 1736 the value of money was falling rapidly, and for many years thereafter it was necessary to add to the one hundred pounds in order to make the purchasing power equal to the value guaranteed in 1731. The amount paid in 1748 was 156 pounds. These were difficult years for the parishioners—difficult to raise the money. When Mr. Chase was dismissed from the church his salary was much in arrears. Four men gave bonds that the salary should be paid, and the family should have the use of the house and barn, together with the fire wood, for a year should they desire it. The church also voted "to give a contribution free—no rates or tax to be paid by contribution". Mr. Chase was a beloved pastor; it is said that for the next generation many boys in the parish were named 'Stephen'.

#### REV. BENJAMIN ADAMS 1755-1777

The third minister, Rev. Benjamin Adams, was a native of Newbury, Massachusetts where he was born May 8, 1719. He graduated from Harvard College when he was nineteen years old. On September 29, 1755 he accepted the call to the Lynn End church and was ordained two months later.

He is said to have died in the pulpit, May 14, 1777, but one account says that his death did not occur during a service, but when he had gone to the Meeting House for meditation and prayer. He was thought to have been a Loyalist and was much concerned about his son Benjamin, an enthusiastic Patriot. On the morning of April 19, 1775, as a boy of sixteen, he beat the drum

as he marched to and fro in front of the Gowing Tavern to call the men of the precinct to answer the alarm. Later in the day he marched to Lexington.

The Rev. Mr. Adams married a Lynn End lady, Miss Eunice Orne. Seven children were born during the twenty-two years that they lived in the parsonage. At his death the parish defrayed the expenses of the funeral and erected his gravestone.

The son, Benjamin, became a physician in his native town and lived in what is now the oldest house in town at 300 Main Street.

#### **REV. JOSEPH MOTTEY 1782-1821**

The Rev. Joseph Mottey, the fourth minister, was born at Salem, Massachusetts May 14, 1756. His father was a native of the Isle of Jersey.

Mr. Mottey's preparatory studies in the classics were at Dummer Academy, and he graduated from Dartmouth College on August 26, 1778. He supplied the pulpit at Lynnfield (Lynn End became the District of Lynnfield in 1782) for three years, refusing to become a settled minister during that time. Finally, yielding to the wishes of the people, he was ordained September 24, 1783. It was during this pastorate that Lynnfield became incorporated as a town. Mr. Eben Parsons wrote of Mr. Mottey, "He was tender, faithful and actively benevolent in the discharge of his Christian duty, in the several relations he sustained in domestic and social life, and on the other hand, he was remarkably distinguished by his personal purity and comparative freedom from faults. His faults, few and slight, were of that class which arise from constitutional excess of sensibility, increased probably by his too recluse and sedentary life."

He was in the habit of walking wherever his duties called when the distance was not more than two or three miles. It would seem that his religious views were in some respects modified after he had been preaching for more than twenty years (he was in Lynnfield 38 years). One of his parishioners said to him, "I don't think you preach just the kind of doctrine that you did when you first came here". "Well", replied Mr. Mottey, "I have been studying and reading and preaching for thirty years, and if I had made no progress in knowledge in all that time, I should have been a very dull scholar; and if I should study and preach for thirty years more and make no advancement in knowledge, I should still remain a very dull scholar".

Once someone called Mr. Mottey "odd", he replied: "Yes, I set out to be a very good man and soon found that I could not be good without being very odd".

Mr. Mottey's salary was to be eighty pounds a year. One record says that "in lieu of settlement", he was given the parsonage and farm. He is said to have built the house—now known as the "Haskell House". In it was a room large enough to hold the congregation on those days when the Meeting House was too cold for a service. It was a hundred years before the Meeting House had any paint or any heat. Residents of South Reading called it "the Lord's barn in Lynnfield".

Joseph Mottey had printed over three thousand sermons. Before his death he asked to have all of them destroyed. A few, however, escaped the fire. He wished no public services in the Meeting House, but requested that everything be done as quietly as possible at his death.

#### **REV. JOSEPH SEARLE 1824-1827**

The fifth pastor was Rev. Joseph Searle who graduated from Dartmouth in 1815 and was ordained on January 21, 1824. He resigned in 1827 and went to Stoneham. Mr. Searle was unmarried, and "all the time he was pastor everything seemed to be uphill work. He is said to have been thoroughly orthodox and he was following a much beloved pastor". In both the parish at Lynnfield and the one in Stoneham, his dues to the General Council of Congregational Churches were paid by some of the young women of the congregations.

This pastorate marked the end of an era.



*Meeting House in 1782 after it had been cut in the middle and 14 feet inserted.*

## THE ORTHODOX EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BUILDING

### PART II

Until about the 19th Century, the distinction between Orthodox and Unitarian thinking did not exist, or rather was not formally recognized. By 1820, the schism between the more liberal thinkers and the Orthodox minded members of the congregation here, as elsewhere throughout the country, had grown so strong that separation had become inevitable.

Problems of many kinds arose. How the property should be divided and how financial obligations could be met were among them.

In 1816, during the pastorate of Mr. Mottey, a Methodist Society had been formed and a small church was built near the southeasterly end of the Common. About sixteen members and their families left the Congregational Church. Now another division would present new complications. Nevertheless, the Orthodox minded members of the First Church decided to withdraw and to build a church in which they could listen to the doctrines which they believed essential for their "eternal salvation". This group completed the organization of the Orthodox Evangelical Society of the Congregational Church in 1832.

### LAND BOUGHT FOR THE CHURCH BUILDING

The church building was erected during 1832 and dedicated in October, 1833. The deed for the land was recorded May 17, 1854 and reads in part: "For the sum of \$312 the right, title and interest in and to a certain lot of land, with the buildings thereon. . . . containing one quarter of an acre, more or less, and bounded as follows: viz, Beginning at the Southerly corner by the road leading from Lynnfield Meeting House at land of Wm. A. Whittredge, etc.". Another deed dated two days later gives title to the same land for \$1.00. This deed is signed by seven persons who must have been heirs of one or more persons mentioned in the first deed.

Twenty-nine years later, 1883, John Mansfield of Danvers in consideration of \$2.00 and "also in consideration of love and affection toward said church and divers other good causes" deeded to the Church and it's successors forever a piece of land "four poles by four and a half poles by four poles" for ground for the horse sheds. These were built and stood for years next to the church building.

### **REV. JOSIAH HILL 1833-1837**

On August 17, 1833, Rev. Josiah Hill was given an invitation to be the minister. A clause in his contract and one used with many ministers who followed him was: '(we) agree with him on the condition that his time of service expire with our giving him six months' notice to that effect and to extend to him the same privilege of giving six months' notice on his wishing to leave". When he came, the family lived in a house on Main Street (Near Beaver Avenue), but, he soon built a house nearer the Common. Several entries in the Church records are about the balance of the salaries due Mr. Hill. The salary was paid once a year. The final financial records show how much in arrears the Society was, although he had agreed to relinquish part of his salary.

|                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Salary from the time he settled      | \$1575.00 |
| Received from Treasurer & Miss. Soc. | 1202.50   |
| Note given by the Treasurer          | 373.50    |

When Mr. Hill left to go West, his wife and son remained in Lynnfield. They died here and are buried here. His son, Joseph, left a widow and two sons.

### **REV. HENRY S. GREEN 1837-1850**

Henry Solomon Green accepted on October 20, 1837 the call of the church to become its pastor at a salary of \$500 a year, with the stipulation that he was to be allowed three Sabbaths in each year for the benefit of his health, for the visiting of friends or for general improvement.

On December 27, 1837, he was ordained as pastor, the first ordination in the new church building. Ministers for the Council and Ordination came from the churches of seven neighboring towns. The Council met at the home of Mr. William A. Whitredge, examined the candidate, and found him worthy of the pastorate. Two of the guests taking part in the 11 o'clock ordination service were Rev. Daniel Mansfield and Deacon James Brown of Peabody, both natives of Lynnfield. A committee had been chosen to put the church in order for the Ordination and another committee had to procure singers for this special service.



*Church built in 1832, showing addition of Parish House during Rev. Harry L. Brickett's pastorate, 1882 - 1894.*

In 1839, the Ladies' Circle of Industry was organized. Mr. Shute was employed to repair the blinds, the building and the stove. The Bass Viol, which was the only form of instrumental music, needed repairs.

The next year at the Annual Meeting, a committee was chosen to prevent disturbances in and about the House on the Sabbath Day and at other religious meetings of the Society. A notice was given to parents requesting that children sit in the lower part of the church. The Treasurer was instructed to invite "strangers and other persons he thinks proper to take seats in the pews not occupied". The Society committee was directed to hire some person to take care of the church building.

Two tithing men were appointed; they were Benjamin Shute and William Smith. A tithing man walked up and down the aisles of the church while the service was in session. In his hand he carried a long white pole which had a rabbit's foot fastened to one end and a birch twig to the other, with which he aroused those who nodded or slept during the meeting. In the other hand, he carried a short hazel stick that he would rap and shake on the children who were playing or whispering.

Many of the problems which were experienced over a hundred years ago are still current in 1970. Not everyone was satisfied with the care given to the church building; some who came to the services were cold, others found the summer sun too hot as it shone through the clear glass in the windows.

A set of rules was listed for the care of the building and the work of the janitor. In the warm weather, the House was to be opened and aired and the blinds shut; in the winter time, fires were to be built so that the House would be warm at the appointed time and be kept warm during the service. The paths were to be shoveled when there was snow. The House was to be locked and all blinds shut soon after the service was ended. The floor was to be swept once a month. For four years, the winning bid for this work was \$7.50; but in 1849, it rose to \$10.00

When some of the members became dissatisfied with the pastor and suggested that he resign, he wrote a letter asking that an Ecclesiastical Council be called. One was, and its findings were in commendation of the work and service of Mr. Green. It recorded the hope that he would be guided to a place of "labor where he would be instrumental of long and continued service for his Divine Master". The last sentence in the transcript is a prayer: "May this people be under Divine guidance and share largely in the Divine blessing, and in due time have sent to them by the Great Head of the Church such a pastor as they shall receive with all confidence and love and whose labor among them shall be crowned with abundant success."



*Side view of Old Meeting House, Church built in 1832 and School House built in 1856.*



*Church built in 1832 - School House 1856, with horse sheds for the church showing in the rear.*

## **REV. UZAL W. CONDIT 1850-1855**

In October, 1850, Rev. Uzal W. Condit was ordained as minister. He was very active, and under his leadership, the church and society prospered. When he came, his family consisted of one son and three daughters; and during his residence in town, another daughter was born. In 1853, steps were taken to form a church at South Lynnfield. A Council was called, and six members living in that part of the town were dismissed from the church at the Centre to the newly organized church. The two churches shared the same pastors for over fifty years.

The parsonage which had been built during the pastorate of Rev. Henry Green was in need of repair. At the Annual Meeting, April 14, 1854, a committee was appointed "to take charge of the business relating to the shares in the Parsonage". These shares had been offered to the Society by the persons who had bought them when the land was acquired and the parsonage built.

The next year, the Home Missionary Society of Massachusetts suggested that the minister's salary be raised to \$600.00. For the first time, insurance was placed on all the buildings.

In 1855, Rev. U.W. Condit resigned to become the pastor of the church at Deerfield, Massachusetts.

## **REV. EDWIN R. HODGEMAN 1856-1858**

On December 10, 1855, a call was extended to Rev. Edwin R. Hodgeman, his salary to be \$650 a year.

Much of the time of the Annual Meeting was given to the consideration of the question as to whether the price of pews should be raised. The first vote was to increase the price; before the meeting was over, another vote rescinded the first.

In 1858, Mr. Hodgeman resigned in order to go to a larger parish at Westford, Massachusetts. At the Council called to terminate the pastorate, a part of its report reads: "The Council is pleased to find the most happy Christian relations existing between the parties, and they regret that so happy a relation should be so brief".

## REV. WILLIAM C. WHITCOMB 1859-1861

After the dismissal of Mr. Hodgeman, Rev. William C. Whitcomb was hired as a supply for one year at a salary of \$650 and the use of the parsonage. Immediately, he began very active participation in the life of the church and the entire community. Besides two and three services on Sunday, he began a course of lectures for the young men of the two villages. An entry in the diary of one of the church members reads: "Mr. Whitcomb's sermon was upon riches with which to do good. He would like a better pulpit to preach in, an organ, a spire, and a village clock."

There were many activities connected with the church: Sabbath School Concerts, Mission Concerts, meetings of the Ladies' Circle and of the Sewing Circle. In 1860, it was voted to retain Rev. W.C. Whitcomb, provided he would stay on the same condition as in the previous year.

Mr. Whitcomb was intensely concerned about the question of slavery, and joined the Army as chaplain in 1861. He died while in the service. A letter which he wrote after the Insurrection at Harper's Ferry shows much about the character of the minister and his willingness to become involved in the great issues of the times:

"Lynnfield, Ms. Nov. 20, 1859.

*To His Excellency Henry A. Wise*

*My dear Sir:*

*I suppose you receive many letters now-a-days with reference to John Brown, who has been doomed to execution on the gallows for a violation of Virginia's laws. Excuse a word from me. I have known and loved that infatuated man, and though I do not approve of his course in connection with the Harper Ferry Insurrection, yet I cannot bear the idea of his being put to death.*

*"And I feel it impressed upon me like the bidding of God that I must write a letter to you, yes you, dear sir, whom not having seen, have loved and admired. Do not, O do not let that noble hearted though strangely misguided old man die if it be in your power to prevent so dire a catastrophe. Pray see that his sentence is changed even if it be imprisonment for life, and multitudes will rise up and call you blessed.*

*Please drop me a line and state whether any hope at all may be cherished for John Brown.*

Yours truly and sincerely  
William C. Whitcomb"

The reply which came to Lynnfield:

*"Rev'd. Sir – The very sympathy with John Brown so regardless of social safety, so general, so fanatical and so irreverent of the rights of law, demand his execution as sentenced by the courts. The laws he insulted and outraged are now protecting all his rights of defense and all his claims for mercy.*

Truly yours  
Henry A. Wise

Governor of Virginia"

#### **REV. MOSES BRADFORD BOARDMAN 1863 - 1870**

The next minister was Rev. M.B. Boardman, who was born in the parsonage at Francestown, New Hampshire, May 25, 1833. He was ordained at Lynnfield, October 1, 1863, and remained as pastor of the church until November, 1870. His pastorate was during the stirring and disturbed times of the Civil War. As a pastor, he sympathized with and comforted those whose soldier sons, and husbands and sweethearts did not come back from the War, and those whose loved ones were wounded

Mr. Boardman was a leader of young people, and interested them in the services of the church. Of the thirty-nine persons who joined the church during his pastorate, thirty-one were on profession of faith.

Mr. Boardman resigned to go to a larger church in Connecticut.



*Rev. William C. Whitcomb, minister 1859 - 1861 Chaplain in Army, Civil War.  
Died in Service.*

## **EXCOMMUNICATIONS**

During this period of war stress and of growth in the little church, the only two excommunications to be recorded at Lynnfield took place.

Mrs. Eliza A. Jarvis was asked to renounce the erroneous doctrines that she was advocating. (What they were is not stated.) She refused to return to the Communion or to change her statements. At a church meeting on January 4, 1867, two deacons who were appointed to plead with her reported that they were unsuccessful. The Church then voted that the Clerk be directed to drop her name from the church records.

November 1, 1867, at a regular meeting of the Church in their house of public worship, a letter was read from Charles Nelson Hart, a member of the Church, stating his disbelief in the articles of the Church. The subject was discussed, and he was suspended from church privileges for two months.

Two months later at a regular meeting, the Pastor made a verbal report on the case, stating that he had endeavored to show Charles Nelson Hart his errors and to persuade him to renounce them, but without success. After a general discussion, it was voted unanimously that his name be dropped from the records of the Church.

## **REV. OLIVER P. EMERSON 1871 - 1873**

Rev. Oliver P. Emerson, born in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaiian Islands) where his father was a missionary, came to Lynnfield for his first pastorate. He was a graduate of Andover Theological Seminary, and was ordained September 13, 1871. His stay was short, less than two years. His resignation — he was young and unmarried — caused intense feeling. The Council admonished the Church people for their attitude, and clearly stated that it was only a few who had wished the young man to resign, while a greater number, many of whom had no vote in church affairs, wished him to remain.

Mr. Emerson went to a church at Peacedale, Rhode Island; and later returned to the Hawaiian Islands.

## **WOMEN GIVEN VOTE IN CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS**

The next year, 1874, at a Church meeting, a vote was passed that "All females, eighteen years old and upwards, members of this Church, be entitled to vote in all church affairs, and the same age be observed in regard to the voting age of males.".

## **REV. DARIUS B. SCOTT 1874 - 1877**

In 1874, the Church at South Lynnfield united with the Church at the Centre in calling Rev. Darius B. Scott. He was installed September 3, 1874; and asked for dismissal in 1877 because of poor health. For a while he was obliged to take absolute rest from ministerial work. During his pastorate, he endeared himself to a large number of people, and the Council called to dismiss him said: "he had won the hearty confidence and affection of his people and of his ministerial brethren; and the loss of his labors will be serious to the churches to whom he has ministered.".

## **REV. EDWARD O. BARTLETT 1877 - 1879**

The preacher the next Sabbath after Mr. Scott's departure was Rev. Edward O. Bartlett, a very talented minister. He served as pulpit supply for about two years; and then went to a church in Providence, Rhode Island.

## **REV. CALVIN B. McLEAN 1880 - 1881**

Beginning April 1, 1880, Rev. Calvin B. McLean was the stated supply for one year; at the end of which period, he went to Vineland, New Jersey.

## **REV. HARRY L. BRICKETT 1882 - 1894**

In 1882, there came to the two churches of the town a young man, Mr. Harry Leroy Brickett. During a period of twelve years, he served the churches as pastor and teacher. His ordination and installation took place on Wednesday, May 23, 1883 at the Centre Church, and the installation for the South Church was held in June.

In an Anniversary Sermon given June 14, 1914 when the Old Meeting House was two hundred years old, Mr. Brickett recalled some of the outstanding events of his ministry in Lynnfield (1882 - 1894). It was a period of growth for the town and for the Church. In May 1885, a petition for the Incorporation of the Centre Church was presented to the General Court of Massachusetts. It was learned that the Church could hold property; but the incorporation was not completed at that time. Mr. Brickett noted that after four years of planning and hard work, of self-denial, and of generous giving, the Chapel was completed; and that at the dedication the Note of Indebtedness was burned.

In 1890, arrangements were made for the "better seating of the choir", and a section was enclosed on the floor to the left of the pulpit. Previously, the choir had been seated in the gallery, where, at first, the bass viol had been used; and later a small organ pumped by the feet of the player. During the early years, the congregation had risen and faced the gallery during the singing of the hymns.

A Missionary Society was formed and the first president was the bride which Mr. Brickett had brought to the town during the third year of his ministry.

Mr. Brickett's letter of resignation reveals much about the personality of the pastor who had endeared himself to the churches and the town. He wrote: "I have been with you at your marriage feasts; I have spoken the last words at the burial of your dead; I have laid my hands in baptism upon the heads of your children; I have welcomed many a disciple to your membership; I have rejoiced with you in the erection of a Chapel at each church .... I have been permitted to see each building transformed by your generous gifts into beautiful edifices in which we meet. I have given many an address to the Grand Army of the Republic .... You on your part have been kind, considerate, loving and faithful. You have held up your pastor's hands, you have cheered him in his hours of depression, you have rejoiced with him in his seasons of prosperity.".

Mr. Brickett went to Marion, Massachusetts, where he began his second pastorate.

### **REV. GEORGE E. FREEMAN 1895 - 1900**

At a meeting in January, 1895, it was voted to extend a call to Rev. George E. Freeman to become a settled minister. Mr. Freeman had been in the ministry for thirty-seven years, and he was familiar with the problems of the churches in this area, for he had been the Scribe for the Essex South Council of Churches. His sermons, of more than average excellence, were an inspiration and source of help to the people.

Mr. and Mrs. Freeman were much interested in the work of the Sunday School, and assisted the superintendent and teachers in the training and work of the department. Since the organization of the Sabbath School (in 1900 called Sunday School), there had been twenty Sunday School superintendents in the 72 years.

Mr. Freeman's resignation on December 6, 1900 was due to his ill health.

## REV. WILLIAM E. RENSHAW 1901 - 1907

Rev. William E. Renshaw, the son of a minister, was born at Cave Springs, Missouri, and came to Lynnfield as pastor of both churches in March, 1901.

The beginning of the twentieth century brought a new period of industry and a new tempo in living. Mr. Renshaw's pastorate began at this time. His salary was \$1000, including the use of the parsonage and grounds valued at \$150 per annum. The pastorate was to be regarded as permanent as if by installation, yet at any time, it might be terminated by at least a three months' notice from either party.

Some of the outstanding accomplishments of his ministry were the organization of a Literary Society for the young folks of the town; the procuring of individual cups to be used at the Communion Service; the development of a Home Department of Bible study; and the support of a missionary in India.

At the Annual Meeting in 1905, a resolution was passed that began a practice of securing church contributions that was a forerunner of an "Every Member Canvass". The resolution which gave the reason for its inauguration reads: "Be it resolved at this Annual Meeting, we strongly recommend that a committee be appointed by the Church Society with definite districts given to each one who shall make an annual appeal in his part of the town.". This was in addition to the method used to raise money for the support of the Church – the leasing of pews.

During the latter part of Mr. Renshaw's pastorate, an incident occurred which, blown to hurricane proportions, caused two factions to form within the church and disrupted the fine work that the pastor was doing.

One faction demanded an Ecclesiastical Council to investigate the charges. The verdict as given by the Council was a very strong rebuke to the members of the congregation who had instigated and continued the strife.

Mr. Renshaw tendered his resignation on February 3, 1907, but was asked to fulfill the contract which asked for a three months' notice.

The Annual Meeting on March 14, 1907 voted that the By-Laws should be brought up to date, and that all cases of discipline should be conducted as Christ directed in the Gospel of Matthew 18:15, 16 & 17.

## REV. HALAH H. LOUD 1907 - 1913

From Lead, South Dakota came in 1907, Rev. Halah H. Loud, a New Englander, who had gone West to take a pastorate, and who came to Lynnfield in the fall of the year. In his Memoirs, he wrote of some of the difficulties encountered and overcome, and of the permanent accomplishments for the church and town.

“December was noteworthy in that the Society offered to make over to the Church all its property provided the Church would become incorporated. The agreement was made, and work begun at once to adopt the necessary By-Laws. At the Centre even the name of the Church was in doubt. It appeared as the “First Congregational”; “Evangelical Congregational”; “Orthodox Evangelical”. Moreover, the title to the property was in confusion.

“At my suggestion, we became incorporated under the name of ‘Centre Congregational Church’.”

On February 4, 1908, the final papers for the incorporation of the Church were accepted by the Church.

Mr. Loud’s Memoirs recall an incident which became a town legend and which was often retold: “the Christian Endeavor Society committee decided to replaster the auditorium of the Church without consulting the officers of the Church; and it took a deal of tact to keep the boat on an even keel. There were ten weeks such as rarely come at the beginning of a pastorate, but many important matters were put into shipshape.”.

On April 29, 1908, a committee was appointed to formulate a movement on the part of the Church which “shall look forward toward developing the moral, civic, and social life of the parish.”. The result of this discussion was the forming of the Lynnfield Civic League, which included in its membership nearly every adult in the town. The League instituted “Old Home Day” which was successfully carried out each year for more than a decade.

Since the organization of the Church in Lynn End in 1720, the pews had first been sold, and later over the years were rented. Now a vote was taken to have “free pews”.

Late in September of 1909, the Church at South Lynnfield decided to separate from the union of the two churches. An adjustment in the matter of salaries had to be made, for the Centre had paid three-fifths and the South Church two-fifths.

An early entry in the Memoirs reads: "My predecessor had left a divided church and community. I never knew what the exact causes were, and the first Sunday in December when I preached my first sermon as pastor, I said 'I am not making light of your recent difficulties, but I will thank you not to discuss them with me and my family.' " When Mr. Loud resigned to go to a church at Hampstead, N.H., he left a united church and community.

### **REV. GAIUS JACKSON SLOSSER 1913 - 1915**

Late in 1913, Rev. Gaius J. Slosser, a young man of great sincerity and devotion to the Christian ministry, came as a stated supply for two years. Although his college work took him to Boston four days a week, he was most conscientious and punctilious about visiting the sick and shut-ins. It was with regret, both on his part and that of many members of the congregation and other people in the community, that he left for a larger parish. During his ministry, thirty members were added to the Church.

While working for a Ph. D. at London University, he served a Congregational Church in London, England. During World War I, he was an Army chaplain. After his retirement as professor of Ecclesiastical History at Western Theological Seminary where he taught for 29 years, he became professor of Systematic Theology at the all-Negro Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, N.C. Acknowledgement of his broad scholarship was recognized by the Civil Courts of Pennsylvania, New York, and Connecticut. He was an expert witness in the field of Catholic canon law and church distinctions.

Dr. Slosser wrote extensively. Among his more important publications are: "History of the 212th Engineers"; "Christian Unity in All Communions in All Lands"; "Outline of the Christian Faith"; and "They Seek a Country".

### **REV. J. SHERMAN GOVE 1915 - 1918**

The next pastor was Rev. J. Sherman Gove, a graduate of Oberlin College and Chicago Seminary. With his family, three daughters and a son, he came from a church ministry in Connecticut. They soon made for themselves a very warm place in the hearts of the people. The love and admiration in which they were held is best expressed in the Resolutions passed by the Executive Committee at the time of Mr. Gove's resignation: "Resolved: That in granting the request of our pastor, Rev. J. Sherman Gove, to be released from the duties now devolving upon him in this parish, we are losing an under shepherd whose labors have been most conscientiously and acceptably performed.

“Resolved: That we take heart of joy in the record of the days of the sojourn of this pastor and his family in our midst. There has been sustained interest; financial prosperity in spite of war conditions; out reaching in substantial aid to all sorts of appeals; the reign of good fellowship; and augmented activities in all good lines in our community.

Resolved: That the Church and congregation have the parsonage family in their hearts in prayer. Because of the going of their son to serve under the colors with our boys, a tie has been formed and cemented that will never fail to be of special significance.”.

Mr. Gove passed away at his home in Manchester, N.H. a few years later.

### **REV. FRANCIS D. GEORGE 1918 - 1921**

Rev. Francis D. George was the pastor who came at the end of the year. In his letter of acceptance, he wrote of the cordiality and goodwill of the people of the Church and community. During this pastorate, the 200th Anniversary of the Organization of the Original Church in Lynn End was observed on Sunday, August 15, 1920. The Anniversary Sermon was given by Rev. Austin Rice, and the organist for the Cantata and other music was Mrs. Henry Russell.

### **REV. ALEXANDER H. STEWART 1921 - 1923**

Rev. Alexander H. Stewart came for two years and then resigned to work in the Methodist Church Fund Raising Department. Mrs. Stewart was also an ordained minister, and in the year 1923 she was the only woman to have offered prayer in the United States Senate. She was a dynamic worker in the International Woman’s Organization for Peace. Their oldest daughter was born in the parsonage; and in 1960, a son was ordained a minister in Buffalo, New York.

At a special meeting held on May 23, 1923, the resignation of Mr. Stewart was received.

### **REV. NORMAN B. CAWLEY 1923 - 1928**

In September, 1923, a young student minister, Rev. Norman B. Cawley, was hired for the following two years. The salary was to be \$2500 a year, and he was to give four days a week to the work in Lynnfield. Soon after his arrival, a church south of Boston offered him a larger salary, but he chose to remain in town. For years after he had left the Church in Lynnfield, young people went to him to be married, and older folks would look him up for words of advice. He organized a Men’s Club, and as there was at that time no special association for young people, Mrs. Cawley and George S. Robinson organized a Young People’s Society that proved of great value.

Mrs. Cawley helped to put on pageants for Easter and Christmas; and her interest and skill in music was most helpful whenever a substitute organist or a pianist was needed for the many rehearsals for church entertainments..

The two-year contract was renewed twice.

At the Annual Meeting in 1927, Mr. Cawley told of his desire to go to England during the summer to visit the home of his birth, Plymouth, England. A vote was passed to give him a six weeks' vacation with full salary.

A fund for a new organ was one of the continuing projects, and almost a thousand dollars had been collected before 1928. In May, 1928, Mr. Cawley submitted his letter of resignation, expressing his appreciation of the cooperation of the members, his pleasure in living in Lynnfield, and the friendly attitude of the town's people.

#### **REV. J. RAYMOND CHADWICK 1928 - 1936**

Rev. J. Raymond Chadwick was another young minister who came while he was still studying for an advanced degree at Boston University. Both Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick were active in all phases of church work. A Junior Christian Endeavor was formed; four deacons instead of two, were chosen; and new hymn books were obtained. Repairs and renovations were made at the parsonage.

Mr. Chadwick was asked in 1930 to remain during the next two years, and the matter of revising the Church constitution and By-Laws was brought up for discussion. During these years, an Episcopal service was held in the Church building at 8:45 each Sunday morning, while the Congregational service was at eleven o'clock. The friendly Christian concern for the group of Episcopalians who desired to have services with their own form of worship offered them the opportunity to meet each Sunday until they could obtain a meeting place of their own.

A Cradle Roll department was begun.

These were the days of the "Great Depression", and many members felt that the salary of the pastor should be reduced, while others felt that it was hardly a living salary. The Annual Meeting voted to keep it at \$2,200. Mr. Chadwick asked for the privilege of part time in order to continue his long neglected studies toward his doctor's degree.

In 1936, Mr. Chadwick resigned to accept the pastorate of a larger church in St. Paul, Minnesota. Later he became president of Iowa Wesleyan College at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, a position which he held for over ten years, and which was terminated by his sudden death.

## REV. JOHN ROSSNAGLE, JR. 1937 - 1939

Before the first full year of Mr. Rossnagle's pastorate was completed, his health began to fail. At the Annual Meeting on May 11, 1939, the following resolutions were placed in the records:

"Whereas: It has pleased God in his infinite wisdom, to take unto himself our beloved pastor and friend, the late Rev. John Rossnagle, Jr., and  
"Whereas: We do deeply mourn the loss of him whom we have learned to love and to admire,  
Therefore, Be it resolved that we, the members of the Centre Congregational Church shall ever treasure his memory and hold in our thoughts the example he set us of true Christian fineness and fortitude and loving-kindness, and give thanks that even for a little time he was allowed to dwell among us,  
And, Be it further Resolved that these Resolutions shall be inscribed upon our Church records, and that a copy of them be sent to his wife and family, for whom we have the greatest sympathy and whom we shall always think of as our own.

Centre Congregational Church.".

## REV. WARD J. FELLOWS 1939 - 1944

On June 5, 1939, a call was extended to Rev. Ward Jay Fellows, and in September, a Council of the Woburn Association of Churches was convened for the purpose of examining licentiate Ward J. Fellows for ordination as pastor.

During the first years of his pastorate, discussion was about the necessary changes in the By-Laws and Constitution. The committee gave many hours and deep consideration to the subject; but when the results were ready for consideration, it was difficult to secure a quorum at the meetings of the members of the Church.

In May, 1941, it was voted to extend a call to Mr. Fellows to continue for two years, the salary to be \$1800 and the use of the parsonage.

Our Country had entered World War II, and at a special meeting held on July 9, 1942, Mr. Fellows resigned in order to enter the Army as a chaplain. Instead of accepting his resignation, it was voted to give him a Leave of Absence for one year without salary, and the Pastor's family to continue to use the parsonage if they so desired.

In his letter of explanation of the action he was taking, Mr. Fellows told of his reasons for becoming a chaplain - "only about one-half of the quota of the Congregational Christian chaplains has been filled, and there is real need and opportunity for the chaplain's work." .... Being convinced of the importance of the War our Nation is waging, and feeling the need for chaplains, I have been impelled to undertake this work.".

The problem arose of finding a candidate to "fill the pulpit" during the absence of Mr. Fellows. After his year of absence had expired, he wrote saying that he would continue as a chaplain until the War was over; and at that time he suggested that his resignation be accepted in order that the Church might have a settled pastor. Again the Church voted not to accept his resignation, but to continue his connection with the Church.

He did not return to Lynnfield at the close of the War.

#### **REV. LAUCHLIN MACDONALD 1942 - 1947**

A meeting was called on August 31, 1942 to consider the appointment of Rev. L.D. MacDonald as acting minister. It was the opinion of the Council that the Church should proceed in this matter just the same as in the case of engaging a new minister to fill a regular vacancy, except possibly that the new minister should be designated as temporary or acting pastor.

Rev. Lauchlin MacDonald came as a student pastor, continuing his work at Boston University. He was asked to stay for one year and at the end of that period he was requested to remain for two more years.

Rev. Mr. Fellows wrote to the clerk of the Church: "We have been glad and proud to say we are 'on leave' from Centre Church, but now it looks as if the War will go on too long to ask you to maintain pastoral relationship. You need to be free to make a more permanent connection with a minister than is possible on the interim basis.".

A letter was sent to the chaplain telling him of the decision of the Church and of the hiring of Mr. MacDonald for the next two years.

It was during these years that the position of deaconess was discussed, and when it was offered to a woman who was very active in the work of the Church, she replied that she "did not want to be the first woman deacon".

Rev. Mr. MacDonald gave much time to the pastorate work and was especially helpful to those who had sons or husbands in the Service. He continued his studies at Harvard College, and at the close of his ministry in Lynnfield, became Professor of Philosophy at the University of Mississippi. When he left there after ten years of teaching, he said that his greatest regret was in leaving the little church where during those years he had served as pastor on a volunteer basis without pay.



*Centre Congregational Church as it appeared in the 1940's*

### Part III

### PERIOD OF EXPANSION

The close of World War II brought to the whole Western World more rapid changes than had ever before been experienced. It was the beginning of the Space Age. The influences of these great changes came to the suburban town of Lynnfield. It was no longer to be the slowly-growing agricultural village of the past three centuries. From the days of the earliest settlers, each house had its own well to supply the needed water. Now Town water was installed, and immediately the population of the village began to increase, and the newcomers were not farmers, but research workers and executives, white collar and blue collar employees in the neighboring towns and cities.

#### REV. FRANK MILTON SHELDON, D.D. 1947 - 1952

To this changing, growing community came Dr. Frank M. Sheldon, from a large mid-western church, The Grand Avenue Church of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he had been the pastor for twelve years.

The five years of Dr. Sheldon's pastorate marked many changes both in local church procedures and in the wider world relationships.

The Centre Church voted approval of the merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Church into the United Church of Christ.

The need for a larger Parish house was very evident, but before such an addition could be made it became necessary to establish definitely the boundary between the Library, which was in the old schoolhouse built in 1856, and the church property. The horse sheds had extended from the edge of the church building some distance behind the school. They had been removed some years before. With the aid of the selectmen the boundaries were determined. Plans were immediately made for an enlarged Parish house.

The time of the Annual Meeting was changed from the spring months to the second Thursday in January, at which time officers should be elected and the reports presented in writing. The fiscal year was to be from January 1 to December 31.

On July 13, 1952 the resignation of Dr. Sheldon was accepted with deep regret. He was given the title of Pastor Emeritus. Four years later he died at the age of eighty-one.

Centre Congregational Church as it appeared in the 1950's



## REV. OTTO K. JONAS 1953 - 1959

The next minister, Rev. Otto K. Jonas, with his experiences both as a pastor and as a chaplain in the Army recognized at once the problems caused by the ever-increasing growth in population in the town and the increasing membership in the church. Two services were held each Sunday morning, and two sessions were scheduled in the Church School. With the enlarged Parish house, it had been possible to have a Kindergarten five days a week. This was called the "Tower Kindergarten" because of the tower on the church building — the tower in which hung the Church bell. Mr. Jonas began to issue a monthly bulletin called "Tower Notes" which told of the activities within the church and announced coming events.

The parsonage, which had been in constant use for more than a hundred years, was in need of extensive repairs, and the question arose as to the advisability of selling it and buying a larger, more modern dwelling. In 1957 the house at 282 Summer Street was purchased for a parsonage, and the Main Street house sold.

Previously deacons had been elected for life, now it seemed wiser to have each deacon serve for a term of four years, with the added stipulation that none would be eligible for re-election until one year had elapsed after the expiration of his term. The same rule applied to the members of the Board of Deaconesses.

In January, 1954 a committee was appointed to study the possible expansions of church facilities. During the next two years the study continued. In 1955 the by-laws were revised and arranged in a more logical order. It was voted that the Finance committee would be known as the "Board of Trustees".

The Study Committee on an enlarged church sanctuary presented a report that showed all the work that had been done and at the Annual Meeting in 1957 it was voted to engage the services of an architect to prepare preliminary plans and estimates.

At the Annual Meeting in 1958 plans were made to purchase from Miss Elizabeth Green all her real estate at and near the corner of Main and Summer Streets, adjoining the land where the 1832 church was located.

The duties of the pastor had increased at least three-hundred fold, and Mr. Donald Bossart, a student at Boston University, was engaged as Director of Religious Education, giving three days a week to the work at the church. He left at the end of the college year, and John Gattis, with his wife, came to continue the work with the young people.



## REV. ANDREW C.K. RICHARDS 1959 - 1963

With the realization of the ever-increasing service necessary, the church welcomed in 1959 Rev. Andrew C.K. Richards. The influence of Mr. Richards' personality within the church and in the community, and his enthusiasm for life was felt more and more during his all-too-short ministry.

On June 4, 1961 Garvey F. MacLean, who had come to the church as a leader in the youth work, was ordained at a very impressive service. He remained as Assistant Pastor until he resigned to become pastor of the Congregational Church at Presque Isle, Maine, and is now chaplin at Bates College.

May 22, 1960 marked the dedication of the new sanctuary. On that Sunday morning a service was held in the old sanctuary; in the afternoon a service of dedication took place in the new sanctuary.

On Monday evening there was a special service of worship presented by the youth of Centre Church.

The dedication of the new organ was on Tuesday and was followed by a banquet. An interesting and inspirational talk was given by Rev. Otto K. Jonas, who had initiated the plans and been the leader in the building of the new edifice. This talk was followed by a pageant which recalled many incidents in the life of the church from the early 1700's to 1960.

Lynnfield now had a Senior High School and the first graduating class was invited to a Baccalaureate Service on June 4, 1961.

Among the many activities sponsored by the different church groups was the Heifer project which was given enthusiastic support by young and old alike; an AA Group; the collecting of money and clothes to go to Korea; continuing interest and contributions to the Social Settlement in Athens, Greece, where Margaret and Nowell Stewart were the leaders; and continued support of the work being done at St. Mark's in Roxbury; and other local projects which had been considered worthy of support for many years.

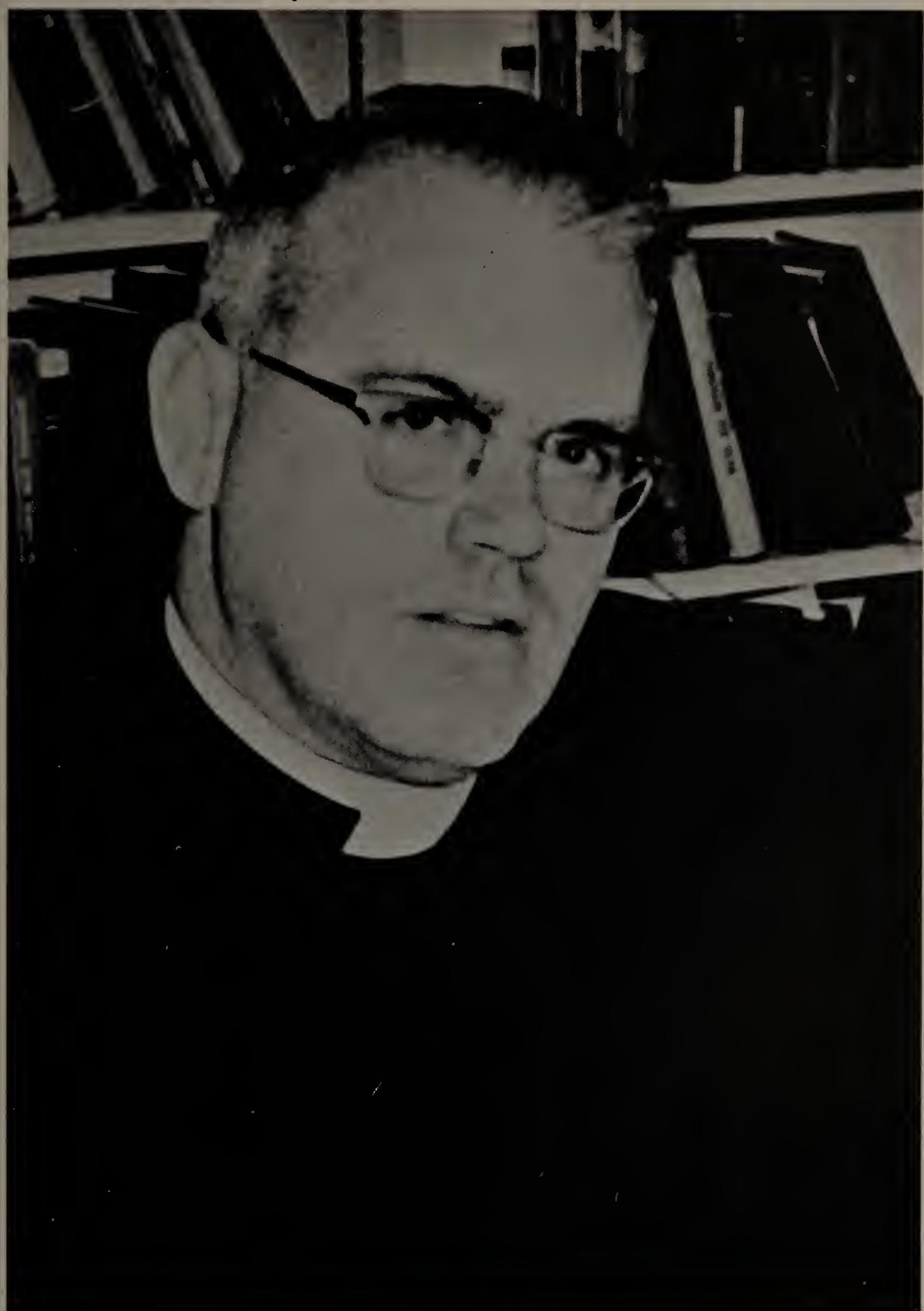
Work with the Youth Groups became more meaningful each year, a Golden Age group was formed, Bible discussion groups met regularly during the winter months, and a series of lectures were arranged with the cooperation of the Wakefield churches.

Under Rev. Richard's leadership as the delegate of the Woburn Association, the church unanimously approved the constitution of the United Church of Christ.

November 29, 1963 brought great sadness to the Church and to the Town by the sudden death of Andrew Richards. He had offered leadership, not only from the pulpit and in his relationship with his parishioners and with his Christian counseling, but he had also served as chaplain of the Fire Department, and as chaplain to the Lynnfield Lodge, A.F. & A.M., and as secretary of the newly-formed Lynnfield Rotary Club. His Christian concern and service extended beyond the boundaries of Town, Commonwealth, and Nation to include the needs of the whole world.



*Congressman Dr. Walter Judd, Rev. Andrew C.K. Richards, Mr. & Mrs. Firm Weaver, at the dedication of the new sanctuary 1960.*



*Rev. Andrew C. K. Richards 1959 - 1963.*

## INTERIM

The Church was very fortunate in securing for an interim pastor, Dr. Russell G. Schofield of Melrose. He was ably assisted by Rev. Garvey MacLean who carried on the work with the young people.

The 250th Anniversary of the building of the Old Meeting House and the 150th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town of Lynnfield was scheduled to take place in June 1964. Mr. MacLean, aided by Dr. Schofield, whose knowledge of and enthusiasm for Colonial History, gave the church the opportunity to prepare and carry out meetings of historical significance wherein all the churches of the town participated in a truly ecumenical manner.

Dr. Schofield, arriving in a buggy, drawn by a horse, entered the Old Meeting House and preached a sermon there. Rev. Douglas A. Elliott of the Lynnfield Trinity Baptist Church met the congregation at the church built in 1832 and preached in the manner of that era. Rev. Monsignor Francis J. Lally delivered the sermon in the new sanctuary. Music was furnished by members of the choirs from all the churches.



*Chancel in the new sanctuary*

## REV. DR. ZDENEK F. BENDAR 1964

Dr. Zdenek F. Bednar came to the Church in 1964 from an unusual background and from experiences in his life that make him particularly sensitive to those in need. Dr. Bednar was born in Czechoslovakia, where his father was a Protestant minister and the Dean of the University of Prague. During the Nazi occupation, he spent three years in a Forced Labor Camp in Kolben.

Following the liberation of his country he matriculated at the University of Prague in the field of Theology. He came to the United States to study at the Hartford Seminary. While in Hartford he ministered to a parish of Italian people, and during the summer vacations he served country parishes in Vermont.

In 1949 he was ordained into the Christian Ministry. Later he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Boston University.

Dr. Bednar came to Lynnfield from a pastorate at Canton, Massachusetts. In 1964 Dr. Bednar and Rev. Garvey MacLean, who had been ordained at Centre Church in 1961, were installed as Pastor and Assistant Pastor.

Dr. Bednar's deep spiritual commitment and his knowledge of human needs has made an indelible impact on the Parish and the many Massachusetts Conference and Association Committees where he has been called to serve.

In addition to the usual innumerable pastoral responsibilities of his ministry Dr. Bednar gives radio broadcasts over a Boston station sending messages over Radio Free Europe.

Each decade has problems peculiar to its time, and in the 1960's the prevalence of the use of drugs among the younger folks caused concern and a kind of assistance never needed before. This has been given.



*The Installation of Dr. Zdenek F. Bednar and Rev. Garvey F. McLean - 1964*

## ASSISTANT MINISTERS

### REV. GARVEY F. MACLEAN 1960 - 1965

Rev. Garvey F. MacLean came to Centre Church in August, 1960 where with Rev. Andrew A.K. Richards he worked as Minister of Religious Education and Assistant minister. He was ordained June 4, 1961. His service to the Church was very much appreciated and unusual. He worked with two regularly installed ministers and also with Dr. Scofield, who came as Interim pastor after the death of Mr. Richards. He was installed as assistant minister on October 18, when he shared with Dr. Bednar the installation. He left Centre Church in November, 1965 when he went to Presques Isle, Maine as pastor of the Congregational Church in that town. In September, 1969, he went to Bates College as Protestant Chaplain.

### REV. STEPHEN D. GILBERT 1966 - 1969

Rev. Stephen D. Gilbert received his A.B. degree from Bates College and then went to the Colgate-Rochester College of Theology. He came to Lynnfield as Assistant Minister while still in the Boston School of Theology working for a Master's Degree. His work with the young people was outstanding, and his thoughtfulness for and understanding of those in the hospitals and nursing homes endeared him to the older members of the church. He was with the Lynnfield church from 1966 to 1969, when he accepted a call to be the pastor of the Edgeworth Congregational Church at Cranston, Rhode Island.

### REV. CAMERON BORTON 1969 -

Rev. Cameron Borton came as assistant minister in 1969. A graduate of Brown University, he received his degree in Theology from Boston University. He also spent one year at New College in Edinburough, Scotland. He brings to Centre Church an understanding of the needs of the young and the interests of the older members of the church from his studies and experiences. He has served as pastor in the east at Harvard, and Winchendon, Mass. and in the west at Claremont, California.

### MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. 1967 -

Rev. Judith E. Hjorth came as full time Minister of Christian Education from the Newton Highlands Congregational Church. She received a B A degree from the University of Washington, Washington in 1961, and then went to the Andover-Newton Theological School. She was ordained by the Metropolitan Boston Association of the United Church of Christ in May 1965.

## PARSONAGES AND PEWS

During the pastorate of Rev. Nathaniel Sparhawk, the first minister, no parsonage was provided as his wife, Elizabeth Perkins, a Lynn End young woman, had inherited a part of her father's estate which included a house. This building was on the land opposite what is now the West Cemetery, at the corner of Main Street and Beaver Avenue.

On October 25, 1731 the church voted to procure for the Rev. Stephen Chase, the second minister, "a convenient house and a barn as convenient to ye meeting house as may be, with accommodations to keep three cows, one horse and ten sheep, and two acres of land to raise some necessaries for a family." "Ye house to be 36 feet long and 19 wide and the barn 20 feet square, ye house to have a convenient cellar and two stacks of chimneys."

In the **HISTORY OF LYNNFIELD** it is stated that this parsonage stood where the late Judge Nash's residence now is. That is the house now known as the "Haskell House."

At the time of Rev. Joseph Mottey's settlement the parsonage was given to him "in lieu of settlement." Another statement about the parsonage states, "The farm and house were a gift to the reverend gentleman at the time of his settlement." One record says that Mr. Mottey built a house on the spot — a house which later received several additions. One room in the house was large enough to hold the congregation when the Meeting House was too cold for a service. Many years passed before there was any heat in the Meeting House.

At Mr. Mottey's death the property went to his only daughter, who was born, lived and died there. She married Captain Henry Bancroft, a retired sea captain. Their daughter became the wife of Cyrus Wakefield for whom the town of Wakefield was named.

The parsonage of the Evangelical Society was built on Main Street (#574). A ministerial society was formed in 1839 and shares were sold for \$25 each. Land was bought and a house built. Rev. Henry Green and his family were the first to occupy it, and their children were born there.

This parsonage has been the home of twenty-four different ministers and their families-almost one hundred twenty years of constant use.

During the pastorate of Rev. Otto K. Jonas a house on Summer Street, built by Miss Gertrude Emery, was bought for a new parsonage. The Main Street parsonage sold for \$15,300 and the Summer Street property bought for \$31,500.

On January 7, 1964 the Church Council authorized a committee to investigate the feasibility of purchasing an additional parsonage. This committee meeting, January 28, felt the most pressing problem was the immediate acquisition of a second parsonage.

Before February 4 a suitable house had been located, inspected and investigated at 249 Essex Street, and it was immediately purchased.

The next task for the committee was to study the feasibility of replacing the parsonage on Summer Street should it seem advisable in consideration of the cost of repairs and the increasing rise in taxes on the land that the Church could not utilize. After careful study, the committee agreed that replacement was not only feasible, but mandatory.

The choice of the Study Committee was the seven room, nine year old Garrison Colonial house at 15 Richards Road. It was purchased and made ready for occupancy on August 1, 1964.

The earliest records of the Church and precinct give detailed instruction about the building of the pews and where the members should be seated. "Seating of the meeting house" was often the cause of much jealousy and hard feeling. The deacons usually occupied the front seats. Sometimes one of them "deaconed off" or lined the Psalms and blew the pitch pipe.

There is no record as to when men and women sat together, but at first the men were on one side of the room and the women on the other. This practice must date back many centuries to the old Jewish law that women should sit where the men could not see them — the reason: "Women will distract men from their prayers." How long this practice continued is not noted in any record found.

The pews were of the "box" type and there does not seem to be any way to determine how many persons could be seated in one.

But the "seating" was exactly determined by a committee appointed by the precinct. The first record is dated February 25, 1720 and its wording and spelling seem very quaint today: "Att a meeting of ye Commete Chosen to grant Pues to such as they should judge proper persuents to ye vote of sd Presinct January 25th 1720 and they disposed them as foloweth — 1 to Mister Sparhawk by ye pulpit on ye womans sid, 2 to deacon Pearson on ye other sid of ye pulpit and next to William Eaton and next to Ensign Parker and next to Sargant Gowing and next to Capt. Bancroft. ...." Twelve pews were assigned and then one "communitue pue." These assignments are followed by the conditions under which grants had been made: "Thes Pues are Granted to them and their heirs not to be disposed but to ye precinct they returning ye money it cost to build them again and all the pues above said are to them and their heirs except yt which Mister Sparhawk and that is to ye ues of ye ministry forever."

It is possible that two or more women shared a pew, for the records show that ten shillings was paid by Stephen Wellman toward the building of a pew for his wife and a like amount paid by John Hawkes and by Elisha Newhall toward the cost of the pew where their wives sat, while Esther Eaton, a widow, paid a like amount "toward building of the pew she sat in."

These records were written by James Pearson, Parish Clark (this spelling for clerk).

Thirteen years later on December 25, 1733 an entry shows how detailed were the documents that were considered necessary when a pew was sold:

"Whereas Capt. James Pearson was pleased to dispose of his pew in Lynn North Precinct Meeting House we the committee of said Precinct have procured it for the Precinct with a writing under his hand and seal as followeth by order of the committee. John Bancroft, Precinct Clark."

With as much detail as a deed for the transfer of land the record of the transfer was made by the clerk and the names of two witnesses appended. The transfer paper read:

Whereas I the subscriber having a pew granted to me in the Lynn North Precinct Meeting House and I being removed from thence do according to the grant of the pew resign it up to the precinct which was if any did sell it should be to the precinct they paying what they cost the building and the committee having paid me three pounds forty shillings for my own pew and twenty shillings for the community pew which I built upon consideration thereof I do acquit and discharge the precinct and acquit my right in the precinct meeting house as witness my hand and seal."

As no punctuation marks were used, it is somewhat difficult to be sure of the exact meaning.

The next year there was a rearrangement of the seating of some members and it is possible that women were permitted to sit on the "men's side," for the record says that Capt. Benjamin Gerrey's wife; Capt. Elisha Newhall's wife and Mr. Thomas Hodgman's wife were assigned to the pew that was Capt. James Pearson's. Also that in the corner pew between this and Mr. Hart's pew were to be seated Widow Esther Eaton and Stephen Wellman's wife.

Not always was the assignment made by the committee accepted. One report states: "The part of that pew granted unto Mister Gardner he refusing to accept it we the committee do grant the same unto Mr. Samuel Potter."

When the Orthodox Evangelical Church building was completed, the pews were rented on a yearly basis, the money being used for the salary of the minister and for the upkeep of the building. As the amount collected in this way was never enough to meet the annual expenses, it was always necessary to raise money by other means. Each year at the annual meeting a vote was taken as to whether the members would increase the cost of rentals. Several times it was voted to do that, but before the meeting closed the vote would be rescinded.

The location of the pew determined the amount to be paid. The pews were numbered.

There is an article written by Thomas B. Wellman that tells about the seating in the church auditorium during the pastorate of Rev. U.W. Condit, the year 1835. A seat near the pulpit was occupied by Mr. Levi H. Russell, except when he sat in the choir and played, or his fine tenor voice aided in the singing. He was an ardent lover of the Sabbath School and helped to make it efficient. No. 12 was the pew of the senior deacon, an old gentleman, and at the head of the pew, his wife, a true helpmate.

"In a corner pew sat Mr. William Whittredge and his large family. Three seats from the front sat the minister's family, and that was reserved for them over a hundred years. And so the story went with an anecdote about the occupants of each pew.

The pews were pleasing to look at, but hard to sit in. The regular occupants usually provided a cushion which went the entire length of the pew, and often there was a stool upon which the feet could be placed.

During the pastorate of Rev. Harah H. Loud a vote was taken in 1908 to try the experiment of "free pews," and the following year the decision was made to continue this practice.

## MEMORIAL HALLS

*“None knew thee but to love thee  
None named thee but to praise.”*

When the new Parish House was completed, a meeting on December 24, 1950 was held and decisions of far reaching importance were reached. It was voted that, “In recognition of Dr. Sheldon’s faithful service to Centre Church and his untiring efforts in the planning and construction of our new Parish House that the members of Centre Church name the new Parish House, the ‘Frank M. Sheldon Parish House’, in loving tribute to Dr. Sheldon and in his honor.” On Sunday, January 14, 1950 the Parish House was dedicated, and in the building Dr. and Mrs. Sheldon celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Their six daughters came from different parts of the United States and their son, a Congregational minister from a large Western Congregational church, helped the members of the Parish to make it an occasion never to be forgotten.

The downstairs hall on the east side of the building is the Charles and David Todd Memorial Hall. Charles Nelson Todd and David Bradstreet Todd, the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson B. Todd, were born in Lynnfield, attended the schools here, took part in the many activities of the Church and left for advanced schools, Charles going to Dartmouth College. They were leaders among the young folks. When World War II broke out, they enlisted and both made the Supreme Sacrifice.

The Kindergarten Room was named for Mrs. Ermina J. Brown who for more than forty years was a constant attendant and worker in the Church. She was a member of the Missionary Society and the Ladies’ Circle, but her greatest interest was in the Sunday School, where she taught a class over a long period of time.

The Nursery Room was named for Mrs. Esther Getchell who was a much loved and appreciated teacher of the younger children, but who also served as superintendent of the Sunday School for a number of years. The children of the Sunday School also collected and donated the money for the Christmas Creche which is placed in front of the Church during December.

The Alice K. Sheldon Hall was named in honor of Dr. Sheldon's wife who became much beloved during the time she was in Lynnfield. Her mission in life was to alleviate physical and spiritual distress. Her understanding and comforting sympathy was freely given to all, and many burdens were eased and faith restored to those whom she helped.

Richards Hall is named to honor the memory of Rev. Andrew C.K. Richards, the pastor who came to the Centre Church in 1959 and died November 29, 1963. Mr. Richards was a leader, not only from the pulpit and in his relationship with his parishioners and in the work of his Christian counselling, but also in the Town as chaplain of the Fire Department, and chaplain to the Lynnfield Lodge, A.F. & A.M., and as secretary of the newly organized Lynnfield Rotary Club. His Christian service and concern extended beyond the boundaries of the Town, Commonwealth and Country to include the needs of the World.



*Air view of the entire Centre Church Complex with Old Meeting House in the foreground.*

## THE CIRCLE

*“Give her of the fruit of her hands;  
and let her own works praise her.*

In 1838 the Circle of Industry was organized with “the object to cultivate the principles and practices of benevolence.” Any female maintaining a good moral character could become a member by contributing seventy-five cents a year to aid in its plans of benevolence.

In 1845 it was decided that during the year work would be provided by the Circle and that every member who provided her own work would be required to pay a fine of six cents.

From its first meeting to the present day, The Circle, as it is now called, has contributed to the needs of the Church, but has also enlarged its sphere of activities to help many causes.

Detailed records have been kept over the years, and the progress of the Church in its needs and activities could be traced by the entries made by the secretaries.

One of the projects in 1846 was “That the pulpit should be furnished with a spit dish.” Did the good pastor chew tobacco while standing in the pulpit? That same year \$25 was contributed toward the salary of the minister, and year after year the Circle had made contributions toward the regular Church expenses.

By 1845 the organization was being called, “The Ladies’ Circle.”

In 1941 the Ladies’ Missionary Society and the Ladies’ Circle united under the name “The Circle” of the Centre Congregational Church. Committees were set up to guide specific phases of work that included the activities of both groups, and many new projects and problems of the times.

As the membership in the Church increased, the Circle organized small groups called wheels, that met each month, while the Circle had four regular meetings a year.

A decision was made by the 1969 Circle Board to study the overall Circle program and its effectiveness in the world today. Four new programs have started:

1. SERV Gift Shop - a self-help program sponsored by Church World Service.
2. Danvers State Hospital - a visitation program, contact by mail program, and hopefully patient contact with the outside world for visits in our homes.
3. New-comers - an effort to reach in a more effective way newcomers in our church and community.
4. Child Care - day care for children of parish families has been set up on a one-day-week basis. Other ways to help in this area will be worked out as the needs arise.

Among the many objects accomplished are frequent assistance to all the activities of the Church, various improvements in the church buildings and parsonages, the erection of the chapel - now a part of the parish house, the practical rebuilding of the Main Street parsonage well. A list of the gifts it has made to the Church would be very long indeed.

## THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Missionary Society was formed during the pastorate of Rev. Harry L. Brickett. The first president was the young bride whom the pastor brought to Lynnfield three years after his installation. From that time until the Society merged with the Ladies' Circle, meetings were held each month. Often the study groups were led by the pastors and frequently a home or foreign missionary would tell of work being accomplished and of the needs in his or her particular field.

The members throughout the years were always on the alert to raise money needed to help in some of the causes of that year.

Long indeed would be the list of individuals and groups that benefited by their activities, and equally long would be the number of letters of thanks received by the Society for its help locally, nation-wide, and world-wide. Mrs. Annie Hatch served as treasurer for over thirty years. A Golden Anniversary meeting was held in 1936.

At least a dozen persons who have some time in their lives made their home in Lynnfield and been connected with Centre Church have done specific work in Home Missions or at foreign stations.

Rev. Henry F. Bond married Pamelia Orne Emerson of this town. They worked for many years among the Ute and Crow Indians. Mr. Bond was at one time superintendent of the Montana Industrial School, and Mrs. Bonad was the matron. The latter years of their life were spent in Mrs. Bond's girlhood home on Main Street.

Miss Helen Diana Newcomb, born in Reading, lived in the house, now 498 Main Street. She went from Centre Church as a missionary to Nursaravapetts, Kistna District, India.

Mary A. Parsons, born in Lynnfield, and living the latter part of her life here, was a matron of the Ballard Normal School, Macon, Georgia, established by the American Missionary Association to assist the colored people to become teachers and helpers of their own race.

Miss Annie Bishop and sister, Miss Emily R. Bishop worked under the American Missionary Association in the South. Carl Sydney Bishop, born in Lynnfield, was secretary of the YMCA in the City of Fitchburg.

John Hatch, son of George Hatch, went to Africa as a missionary.

Miss Helen Sheldon returned from the Mission field in Burma, and for years was a devoted and efficient worker in our Church.

Miss Esther Nelson went under the American Board of Foreign Missions to Peking, China, where for five years she worked with Chinese girls who were preparing to be teachers.

Marion Wells, born in the John Kimball house on Chestnut Street, with her husband, Harold Belcher, was for many years in the Mission field in China.

Miss Katherine W. Ross taught under the United Church World Ministry in the American Collegiate Institute in Izmir, Turkey.

Miss Mabel Hasting and Miss Virginia Lyons taught for a few years at the Indian School at Muskogee, Oklahoma.

## **SABBATH SCHOOL      SUNDAY SCHOOL      CHURCH SCHOOL MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The first Sabbath School was organized in the Old Meeting House in 1822 with John Aborn as the Superintendent. For almost two hundred and fifty years many persons have devoted themselves to the work of Christian Education within the Church. The name of the department has changed, Sabbath School was followed by Sunday School, and that in turn became Church School.

For over forty years Mrs. Hattie Russell was the superintendent, still remembered for her dedication to the work, and her knowledge of children. Mrs. Charles Getchell did much in organizing the pre-school department. The present Nursery Room is the "Esther Danforth Getchell Memorial Room."

Another faithful worker, Mrs. Ermina J. Brown, was an active leader, as a teacher and as a worker in all the Church projects. One of our pastors in his diary recorded a conversation he had with Mr. Brown. Mr. Brown: "Wish my wife wouldn't spend so much time down at the church. Told her she'd better take her bed down there and stay." The Pastor: "If she did that, Mr. Brown, we'd see you sometime at church." The present Kindergarten Room is named in her memory. Mr. William Russell served as Superintendent for many years, and also as treasurer to the church.

The first director of Christian Education was Donald Mattheson. He came as a student assistant, while still at Boston University. He was able to devote three days a week to the work at the Church, and stayed one year.

Mr. John Gattis, with his family, came the next year. They were much loved by the young folks and contributed greatly to the enthusiasm of the enlarging groups of Pilgrim Fellowship—senior, middle and junior groups, and helped with the classes and teachers in the Church School.

Since 1965 a new method of Christian Education has been developed which includes two church-school sessions Sunday morning, and the increasingly popular week-day church school which is conducted ecumenically together with St. Paul's Episcopal Church. The week-day church school curriculum includes electives such as drama, art, photography and astronomy. The vacation school is also conducted ecumenically with Protestants and Catholics participating. It has been held during the past two years in the educational building of the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption.

The ministry to youth includes junior high, ninth grade and senior high youth groups. During the Rev. Stephen Gilbert's ministry here, the senior high youth ministry was enlarged, to include the traditional part of the younger groups—worship, recreation and action projects—but also small dialogue groups in which the young people might encounter themselves and one another on a deeper level of feeling. It was because so many areas of life for young people did not encourage this depth of communication that this venture in trust and honesty was begun.

As a part of turning outward to the needs around us, many of our Centre Church young people took part in the Columbia Point Project, and some participated in the tutoring program in Lynn called LEAP. Volunteers go to the Hathorn State School to aid with the work for the Mentally Retarded.

Our young people have attended and taken leadership in denominational camp and conference programs, and several have become State Conference officers.

There is no youth program that fully meets the needs of young people. This is why in the 1970's the Christian Education Department will continue to seek ways that may more faithfully express Christ's purpose for their lives in a world of upheaval and uncertainty.

In an age that does not encourage taking time for reflection, the church has an important ministry in continuing to offer different kinds of groups which encourage thoughtful reflection on the meaning of the Christian faith. Bible study, interpersonal relationships, family conflicts and spiritual disciplines are considered in discussion groups.



*Rev. Fr. David F. Gallagher at dedication of new organ, April 27, 1969.*

## MUSIC

In the earliest days of the church, the hymns were "lined" out, the tunes almost unknown. Often a deacon would have a pitch pipe sound a note and the congregation would sing the hymn line by line. The first musical instrument mentioned in the church records is a base viol. This instrument is still usable. After having been discarded for many years and abandoned in an attic, it was found, restored and has been played at several anniversary celebrations. The craftsman who restored it said that it was a fine instrument and called it a "Prescott cello".

A small organ, pumped by the feet of the organist was used soon after the Orthodox Evangelical Church building was completed.

For years the organist was a volunteer. It was about forty years ago when the Ladies' Circle voted to pay the organist two dollars a Sunday.

The first pipe organ to be installed was pumped by hand. Some young male member of the congregation sat behind a screen and when it was time for the organist to play, moved the bellows to provide air. On more than one occasion the boy would fall asleep during the sermon and would have to be aroused before the closing hymn could be played.

An electric organ was installed after the new chancel replaced the steeple style of pulpit which had been built originally.

Both of these pipe organs had been good second-hand instruments.

Our new pipe organ was dedicated on April 27, 1969 at which time Rev. Fr. David Gallagher, a nationally recognized organist, gave a recital. The new organ was designed and built by Roy E.H. Carlson. There are three manual keyboards of sixty-one notes and the pedal of thirty-two notes. The organ has thirty-nine stops with sixty-eight tablets utilizing thirty-two ranks of pipes and total of 1881 pipes.

The dedicatory statement was: "Centre Congregational's new pipe organ was made possible by many hundreds of faithful people who have donated their generous gifts of time and money. Their faith in God and the ministry of the Church will echo through these chambers in remembrance of their devotion. We join together to dedicate this organ to the perpetual glorification of God through his gift of great music."

## ANNALS

1629 First settlement in Lynn (then called Saugus)  
1635 First record of land assigned in Lynnfield area  
1637 Lynn granted six miles "into the wilderness."  
1639 Town of 'Redding' began to be settled  
South Reading changed name to 'Wakefield in 1868  
1644 Meeting House in South Reading built  
1645 South Reading Church gathered. Lynn End folk joined John Pierson (Pearson); Samuel Aborne, Joseph Newhall  
1663 Sawmill on Saugus River built (between Wakefield & Lynnfield)  
1670 Potatoes introduced into the United States  
1688 Twenty-six from Lynn End subscribed to a fund for repairing or enlarging Meeting House at South Reading  
1706 Common land laid out in North Parish of Lynn (Lynnfield)  
1711 Steps taken to set off area as Second Parish of Lynn (Lynnfield)  
Meeting at Capt. Bancroft's decided to build Meeting House.  
1714 Erection of Meeting House  
1720 Organized as Second Church of Lynn  
Nathaniel Sparhawk ordained as first Pastor  
1782 Meeting House cut in two, and fourteen feet added in center  
1832 Formation of Orthodox Evangelical Society  
1833 Dedication of the Church building  
1837 Old Meeting House remodeled. Lower part used as Town House  
1838 Organization of "Circle of Industry" (Ladies' Circle)  
1839 Erection of parsonage  
1853 Church organized at South Lynnfield—one pastor served both churches  
1886 Completion of chapels at Centre and South churches  
Formation of 'Ladies' Missionary Society  
1890 Parish House completed  
1907 Orthodox Evangelical Society deeds its property to the Orthodox Evangelical Church  
1908 Incorporation of present Lynnfield Centre Congregational Church  
1914 200th Anniversary of erection of Meeting House  
1932 100th Anniversary of organization of Orthodox Society  
1950 Dedication of Frank M. Sheldon Parish House  
1960 Dedication of new Church Edifice  
1969 Dedication of Church Organ

## THE CHURCH TODAY

The ministry and the whole church life has reflected the pressing issues of the sixties; secularization, broken family life, urbanization, drug culture, racism and the deep problems of justice and peace – and has tried to recognize these problems and help to lessen them. A Social Action Committee was formed in 1966 and was instrumental in deepening the awareness of the great social issues. An interfaith Council was formed and it has become a vital ecumenical group in our community fostering such ventures as METCO, LEAP tutorial program in Lynn, Teen Center in our community, a long range educational program on drug addiction and the establishment of a “hot line” for the drug addicts in distress. In 1969 the Church voted to participate in the Mission Advance program of the State Conference and our members pledged \$40,000 as their share. It was the first large financial drive in the history of our church that was wholly for others. Our belonging to the United Church of Christ which was ratified in 1957 has made us more deeply aware of our larger responsibilities, and has also forced us to consider theological implications of the merger. Since we voted to become a part of the United Church of Christ as early as 1952, our parishioners were able to discuss the Constitution and the Statement of Faith before they were adopted in 1961. The Statement of Faith explains some of the changes in emphasis in our common ministry and its objective: “He calls us into his Church, to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the Gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ’s baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory. He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen”

Without the past there could not be the live, vital concern and growth of the present. From the early builders of the Meeting House and the founders of the Lynn End Church Society came the seed that has grown both in times of warmth and sunshine as well as in the seasons of drought and cold, to the present vital concern for others, motivated by Christian faith.

May we in the year to come build as well for the generations of the future.

## PASTORS 1720 to 1970

|                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| REV. NATHANIEL SPARHAWK       | 1720-1731 |
| REV. STEPHEN CHASE            | 1731-1755 |
| REV. BENJAMIN ADAMS           | 1755-1777 |
| REV. JOSEPH MOTTEY            | 1782-1821 |
| REV. JOSEPH SEARLE            | 1824-1827 |
| REV. JOSIAH HILL              | 1833-1837 |
| REV. HENRY S. GREEN           | 1837-1850 |
| REV. U.W. CONDIT              | 1850-1855 |
| REV. EDWIN R. HODGMAN         | 1856-1858 |
| *REV. WILLIAM C. WHITCOMB     | 1859-1861 |
| REV. MOSES B. BOARDMAN        | 1863-1870 |
| REV. OLIVER P. EMERSON        | 1871-1873 |
| REV. DARIUS B. SCOTT          | 1874-1877 |
| REV. EDWARD O. BARTLETT       | 1877-1879 |
| REV. CALVIN B. McLEAN         | 1880-1881 |
| REV. HARRY L. BRICKETT        | 1882-1894 |
| REV. GEORGE E. FREEMAN        | 1895-1900 |
| REV. WILLIAM E. RENSHAW       | 1901-1907 |
| REV. HALAH H. LOUD            | 1907-1913 |
| REV. GAIUS J. SLOSSER         | 1913-1915 |
| REV. J. SHERMAN GOVE          | 1915-1918 |
| REV. FRANCIS D. GEORGE        | 1918-1921 |
| REV. ALEXANDER H. STEWART     | 1921-1923 |
| REV. NORMAN B. CAWLEY         | 1923-1928 |
| REV. J. RAYMOND CHADWICK      | 1928-1936 |
| REV. JOHN ROSSNAGLE, JR.      | 1937-1939 |
| **REV. WARD J. FELLOWS        | 1939-1944 |
| ***REV. LAUCHLIN D. MacDONALD | 1942-1947 |
| REV. FRANK M. SHELDON, D.D.   | 1947-1952 |
| REV. OTTO K. JONAS            | 1953-1959 |
| REV. ANDREW C.K. RICHARDS     | 1959-1963 |
| REV. ZDENEK F. BEDNAR, PhD.   | 1964      |

## **ASSISTANT MINISTERS**

**REV. GARVEY F. MacLEAN**  
**REV. STEPHEN D. GILBERT**  
**REV. CAMERON BORTON**

## **DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**REV. DONALD S. MATHISON**  
**REV. JOHN GATTIS**  
**Mrs. GERALDINE PAIGE**

## **MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**REV. JUDITH HJORTH**

\* Chaplain in Civil War

\*\* Chaplain in World War II

\*\*\*Supply during chaplain's absence



**For Reference**

**Not to be taken**

**from this library**

